



### 3.4 GERMAN (502)

German is examined in the following three papers;

Paper 1 (502/1) - This paper tests Listening and Writing Skills (functional and creative)

Paper 2 (502/2) - This paper tests Grammar and Reading Comprehension

Paper 3 (502/3) - This paper tests Reading and Oral skills (communication skills) this includes Intonation and Pronunciation.

#### 3.4.1 CANDIDATES' GENERAL PERFORMANCE

The table below shows the performance of candidates in German in the years 2011 and 2012.

**Table 13: Candidates Overall Performance in German for the last two years**

Year	Paper	Candidature	Maximum Score	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
2011	1		35	23.33	4.95
	2		40	24.67	7.10
	3		25	17.73	3.49
	Overall	<b>442</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>65.72</b>	<b>14.11</b>
2012	1		35	23.34	4.62
	2		40	26.22	6.64
	3		25	17.08	3.30
	Overall	<b>514</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>66.61</b>	<b>13.11</b>

The following observations can be made from the table above:

- (i) The general performance of the candidates in the year 2012 and 2011 is almost the same with a slight improvement in 2012. The subject mean was higher by 0.89.
- (ii) The candidature is steadily growing. This year it increased by 72 candidates.

#### 3.4.2 German Paper 1 (502/1)

This paper tests listening skills, writing skills and vocabulary. Section I tests general, selective and detailed listening and section II tests writing skills and vocabulary. In section I, the candidates are expected to listen to four passages and to answer accompanying questions. In section II, the candidates are expected to write a composition in form of a letter or an essay of **about 250 words**. The paper carries a **maximum of 35 marks**.

#### Weaknesses

The listening comprehension showed serious lack of practice. In the composition there were of many errors, some affected the general understanding of the composition.. Statistics show that the performance in this paper is very comparable with that of last year.

#### Advice to teachers

To develop an ear that hears German sounds and recognises them, exposure to more authentic conversations and real life dialogues is the key to improve performance in this paper. Teachers are

encouraged to be strict with grammatical correctness when marking students work in listening comprehension and composition to reduce careless mistakes. Teachers ought to confront students with more practice in non guided essays to develop creativity. Students should be exposed to more written German literature.

### **3.4.3 German Paper 2 (502/2)**

This paper tests the understanding and application of grammatical rules and reading skills. These two form section I and II, Grammar in section I and Reading comprehension in section II. In section I, the candidates are expected to fill in blanks in given sentences, combine or change sentences according to their grammatical structure and/or rewrite sentences in accordance to the instructions given. In section II, the ability to extract information from the two texts is tested. Specifically, candidates are expected to read and respond to questions on fictional and non-fictional texts.

#### **Weaknesses**

Section I – Majority of candidates performed poorly in this section. This can be attributed to lack of practice.

Section II – This section was performed best this year. The statistics show an improvement from last year. This is indicated by the mean which is more this year by a score of 2, and later translates to the general slight improvement in the subject.

#### **Advice to teachers**

Practice makes students do well in grammar items. Teachers should give daily exercises to the students from form 1 to ensure the grammar correctness is fully understood. Students need to internalize the rules that govern the formation of sentences in various situations and allocate time to practice German. Fora should be provided where the students can apply the internalised rules in conversations. Small class readers from the internet and other institutions like Goethe Institute can be used in this area to horn the skills of reading comprehension. This can be coupled with book report writing.

### **3.4.4 German Paper 3 (502/3)**

This paper consists of a reading aloud passage, a presentation of a chosen topic and a discussion with the examiners on the already presented topic or a related one. Articulation, pronunciation and intonation are tested.

#### **Weaknesses**

In this year's reading aloud passage, pronunciation of some words was problematic. Intonation of vowels, sentences, diphthongs, umlauts was challenging for average and weak candidates.

Word order especially in subordinate clauses was rendered wrongly. Candidates made very many careless "silly" mistakes that beginners in Form 1 and 2 should not make.

#### **Advice to teachers**

Teachers need to endeavour to know the correct pronunciation of words in order to have the students imitate them. Candidates seem to copy from the teacher wrong pronunciations. Candidates should be helped to interact more with the language in spoken and written form. Training of teachers through attending seminars should continue. When teachers have improved skills in the language this is reflected in the candidates.